

## BETTER MEDICARE ALLIANCE STATEMENT ON S. 1978

October 18, 2017

Washington, D.C. - *Better Medicare Alliance (BMA) President and CEO Allyson Y. Schwartz released the following statement in response to the introduction of S. 1978, legislation designed to delay the annual fee on health insurance providers until 2020:*

“The tax on health insurance scheduled to go into effect in just two months would not only have impact on small businesses, individual and employer group consumers but on older Americans as well. In fact, the Health Insurance Tax (HIT) could have harmful implications for nearly 19 million seniors and people with disabilities on Medicare Advantage – the majority of whom are unaware of the tax and do not have the ability to prepare for the possibility of rising premiums.

“Better Medicare Alliance is encouraged by Senator Heidi Heitkamp’s stance to stop the burden of the tax by introducing a bill to delay the tax for two years. Republicans and Democrats agree that this tax is harmful to seniors and have voted to delay the tax in the past. We call on Congress to act urgently to protect beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Advantage from higher premiums, reduced benefits, and higher out-of-pocket costs.

“If Congress fails to act, updated analysis from Oliver Wyman shows that premiums could increase by \$22 billion nationwide in 2018 - an additional \$255 per year for each Medicare Advantage enrollee, including those who rely on Special Needs Plans and Employer Group Waiver Plans. According to a poll survey by Morning Consult, 85 percent of Medicare

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“Congress must protect beneficiaries from increased costs for Medicare Advantage which is highly valued by beneficiaries for its affordability, simplicity, supplemental benefits, and care management. We urge senators to cosponsor Senator Heitkamp’s legislation and vote to delay the HIT.”

[HEALTH INSURANCE TAX](#)

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